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SUBJECT: GEORGIA: USUN DELIVERS USG PRELIMINARY RESPONSE TO
UN NON-PAPER

REF: A. SECSTATE 33583

[1](#)B. USUN 326

Classified By: Ambassador Susan Rice for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY. Per Ref A instructions, Deputy PolCouns and Poloff shared the USG preliminary response to the UN Non-Paper on the future UN presence in Georgia (Ref B) with DPKO Director for Europe and Latin America, David Harland. Harland acknowledged U.S. views on the dimensions of the proposed security zones, but doubted that Russia would allow zones that were more expansive than exist today. Harland said he agreed in principle with the six U.S. objectives for the UN mission, saying he would quibble only with the attempt to phase in executive policing as unattainable. On the process for achieving a new mandate, Harland thought the ideal scenario would be for the U.S. and Russia to find common ground on security arrangements and elements of a mandate, which then could be used as the basis for achieving buy-in from Georgia and Abkhazia. He thought pursuing a legal mandate for the UN without specifying a security regime would play into Russian attempts to weaken the UN presence on the ground. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (C) On April 8, Deputy PolCouns and Poloff delivered Ref A preliminary reaction to the UN's March 26 Non-Paper (Ref B) to DPKO Director for Europe and Latin America, David Harland.

The Non-Paper outlined recommendations for a future UN presence in Georgia, including a detailed description of a proposed security regime for Georgia/Abkhazia, which would be included in the SYG's report to the Security Council requested by Resolution 1866 (2009). The discussion with Harland covered elements of the proposed security regime, U.S. objectives for the UN mission, and U.S. suggested options for reaching an agreement in the Council on a new mandate.

[1](#)3. (C) Responding to the U.S. response to elements of the security regime, Harland commented that the UN proposals "already cross all three Russian red-lines"-- they are symmetrical, they bind Russian forces to the regime, and they include the Kodori Valley. Harland did not think it would make sense for the UN to propose something that was too far beyond either Russian or U.S. red-lines, since such proposals would be quickly discounted. He said that earlier UN thinking on the "zones of confidence" had thus been revised in an attempt to find a proposal that could achieve some consensus. In any case, Harland doubted that Russia would allow Ochamchire to be included in the regime, due to Russia's intention to use the port as a future home of the Black Sea Fleet. He also explained why the UN had dropped an earlier suggestion for a 700 meter zone between border posts and the boundaries, commenting that the UN had feared it could create conditions that would allow for criminal activity in the areas between border posts.

[1](#)4. (C) Referring to U.S. objectives for a UN mission, Harland said he agreed with all of them, but he questioned whether

the objective of establishing armed UN police units was achievable, pointedly saying, "if the Russians have not given a millimeter on this since 1994, what makes you think you will get this now?"

15. (C) Referring to the process for achieving a new mandate, Harland stressed that he thought the best shot at getting a "credible" security regime confirmed by the Council in June would be for the U.S. and Russia to engage bilaterally in advance of the release of the SYG's report in order to reach an understanding on what is and what is not achievable, given our respective interests and redlines. Harland believed that if the U.S. and Russia to come to an agreement on the basic elements of a security regime, based upon the UN non-paper, the U.S. and Russia would then be in a position to use our leverage with Georgia (U.S.) and the separatist entities (Russia) to obtain their agreement to the arrangement. The Security Council would then be in a position to endorse a regime outlined in the SYG's report that would benefit from the support of all parties.

16. (C) Harland said he thought the option of defining a mandate in the SYG's report without defining a security regime would play into Russian attempts to incrementally diminish the international presence in Abkhazia. He did not believe it likely that Russia would want to give the UN any flexibility to grow its mandate, but instead would likely use delay tactics to prevent eventual agreement on a security regime, meanwhile using the lack of a regime to continue establishing de facto arrangements suitable to its interests on the Abkhaz side of the administrative boundary. Harland said UNOMIG SRSJ Johan Verbeke had a similar fear of Russian

USUN NEW Y 00000384 002 OF 002

intentions after watching Russia inflict what Harland cited as, "death by a thousand cuts" on the OSCE, after Russia had first agreed to a vague mandate that left the OSCE in Georgia too institutionally weak to resist Russians bent on its demise.

17. (C) According to Harland, the United Kingdom had proposed a different option, whereby the SYG would present the Council with his best assessment of what was necessary, and the Security Council would then endorse it. Harland thought this was not a viable option, because it would put the Council in the position of imposing its will on the parties, rather than endorsing an agreement among them. Even though both the U.S. and U.K. options would give the Security Council a necessary fig-leaf to establish a mandate, he said, the parties, including Russia, would not be likely to honor a security regime that they had not been explicitly involved in creating. He believed the outcome of such a process would be a "very weak arrangement on the ground", and therefore reiterated his suggestion for U.S.-Russia bilateral engagement.

18. (C) According to Harland, the likely default option would be for interested parties to feed their comments on a security regime into DPKO, and expect DPKO to find common ground. Harland did not think this method would yield the best result, since DPKO could only guess at the parties' redlines and would in the end have to make the determination about what trade-offs were necessary.
Rice